

THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

**IMADR Oral Statement: 39th session of the Human Rights Council**

**Item 2: General Debate - Oral Update by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

11 September 2018

Speaker: Taisuke KOMATSU

Thank you Mr. President,

We congratulate the High Commissioner on the appointment and thank her for the first oral update to the Human Rights Council. At the outset, we would like to reiterate our calls and commitments laid out in the joint letter addressed to you by over 700 civil society organisations worldwide.

While we reiterate the High Commissioner's concerns on the plight of migrants, we wish to stress that not only migrants, but also indigenous peoples, minorities, and human rights defenders fighting against racial discrimination are often targeted by authoritarian and populist governments as "threats to national security and values". Fuelled by nationalistic sentiment and scapegoating spread by public figures, racist hate speech and hate crimes by non-State actors are also on the rise which threaten our work as human rights defenders and invite mass human rights violations. Therefore, we strongly encourage the High Commissioner to pay close attention to hateful rhetoric employed by political leaders and figures and condemn it immediately wherever and whoever they are, as your predecessor bravely did.

With regards to Sri Lanka, we remain concerned by the slow pace and contradictory statements made by those in the highest authority that undermine the consensus reached in the HRC resolution 30/1. While we welcome the interim report of the Office on Missing Persons (OMP) last week, we regret that the Government is yet to establish other transitional justice mechanisms. The Government of Sri Lanka must walk the talk to realise reconciliation, accountability and human rights across all communities in the country. There is an urgent need for a robust action plan to fulfil the needs of the victims and ensure justice delayed for a long period.

Thank you Mr. President.